GUIDE TO THE SM4 GUARANI FILE

[At the time of the first European contacts in the early 16th century (ca. 1536), the Guaraní occupied vast areas of southern Brazil (parts of the modern states of São Paulo, Paraná, Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul), and neighboring territories of Uruguay, Argentina, and land lying to the east of the Paraguay River in the modern state of Paraguay. Additional settlements were also located on the islands of the lower Paraná River near Buenos Aires. The area occupied ran roughly from the latitude of 26° - 33° S. to the longitude of 48° - 52° W.

Prior to the 17th century the terms Carijo or Cario were applied to the group we now speak of as Guaraní, this latter term not coming into general use until sometime in the 1600's. Since that time the use of the term "Guaraní" has led to a great confusion in the literature because of the ambiguous usage of this nomenclature for both tribal and linguistic indentification purposes. Watson points out that the term "Guaraní" applies not only to a purely linguistic group, the "Tupi-Guaraní", but also has the original tribal or ethnic connotation of applying to all the Indians groups of similar speech found in the Spanish regions of South America. In addition, historically it was applied to the Indians of Guaraní speech who lived in the Jesuit missions, is presently used to refer to certain groups in the southern Brazilian and Paraguayan areas, and finally it is a loosely used term to refer to the modern rural population of Paraguay (Sr Watson, pp. 18-19). Generally it is agreed by most ethnographers that the ethnolinguistic unit we call "Guaraní (Caingua, Carijo or Cario)" is made up of the following ancient and modern divisions: Apapocúva, Arechane, Carima, Cayua, Cheiru, Chiripa, Guarambare, Guayana, Itatin, Ivapare, Mbyá, Oguauiva, Pan, Taicoba, Tanygua, Tape, Taruma and Tobatin.

After a rather sporadic and unorganized resistence to the Spanish conquistadors in the 16th century, the Guaraní were quickly subdued and soon became docile to the demands of their conquerors. When the Jesuits established their missions in the area around 1605, they found the Indians readily adaptable to missionization, and showed great proficiency in learning the arts and crafts introduced by the missionaries. With the explusion of the Jesuits from South America in 1767 the mission Indians dwindled in number, some returning to the bush, some killed in the regional wars of 1816-1818, while still others settled in small villages near the former mission stations. In 1848, by an official proclamation of the Paraguayan government, the remaining 6,000 Guaraní were forced to assimilate themselves into the general Paraguayan population by moving into previously non-Indian village communities. The Christianized Guaraní today form the bulk of the population of Paraguay with their language, modified to some extent by Spanish, being spoken by rural and urban people alike.

All Guaraní groups speak closely related language of the Tupi-Guaraní stock. Dialectical differentiation within the Guaraní linguistic stock, has however, served as the major criterion of distinguishing sub-groups of the ethno-linguistic unit, at least in southern Brazil. Schaden, for example classifies the Guaraní of southern Brazil into three linguistically related groups, the Nandeva, Mbüá and Kayová (see 2: Schaden, this file).

Population figures are extremely difficult to find for the Guaraní and when located at all are usually rough estimates. A reasonable estimate of the Brazilian Cayuá population as of 1943 would be between 2,000 - 4,000 individuals. The entire Guaraní population of this area is probably not much more than that and is concentrated in small reservations

or villages under government supervision and protection. Schaden records some scattered demographic data on the villages he visited during his fieldwork in 1946-1954, which may be found in source 2: Schaden, pp. 15-20. Frequent migrations of the Guaraní population has been noted from early historic times up to the mid-20th century (a group of Mbüá crossed from eastern Paraguay and northeastern Argentina and arrived at the coast of São Paulo in 1946). The early migrations were greatly heightened in the period of 1832-1850 by messianic and revivalistic movements which prophesized the coming of the end of the world and the approach of a new golden age. Three of the Guaraní sub-groups involved in these migrations were the Apapocúva, the Tanygua and the Oguauiva, who, fearing the imminent destruction of the world as announced by their shamans, sought desperately to reach the "Land-Without Evil" where there was an abundance of all good things and eternal life. This paradise was supposedly located in the east, so the migrations were directed toward the Atlantic Coast (1: Métraux, p. 94).

Subsistence was based on intensive agriculture by the brand-tillage method and supplemented by hunting, limited fishing and gathering. Sweet manioc and maize were the staple crops with sweet potatoes, beans, mangara (Xanthosoma sp.), carahu (Dioscorea sp.), mbucucu (a leguminosea), peanuts, bananas, papayas and watermelons also being grown. In pre-Columbian times the only domesticated animal was the Muscovy duck, but today they have dogs, chickens and many European farm animals.

The typical Guaraní village was a politically autonomous community of from four to eight large rectangular houses, some as much as 165 feet long, grouped around a square plaza and the whole completely encircled by a double or

triple stockade and an elaborate system of defensive moats. Each house had a vaulted or gabled roof thatched with grass or palm leaves and was divided into separate family compartments. Some of these houses were capable of containing as many as sixty patrilineally related families. Every village was under the authority of a headman who was succeeded by his eldest son, but the actual power in the community was often exercised by the shaman. Some village chiefs extended their influence over a fairly large area. A general council of adult men and chiefs was held periodically to decide community and district affairs and to elect war chiefs. Although a Guaraní chief was usually succeeded by the oldest son, a stronger member of the family or an individual with special prestige in the community could take the office in lieu of the usual inheritance pattern. Members of the village who were dissatisfied with the headman could secede and start a new settlement with a new leader. Under Spanish influence a community chief in Paraguay had a Spanish title and carried a spedial stick as a symbol of office. Some of the villages under Spanish influence, as in Jesuit times, often had a cacique mayor and cacique menor, a sargento and a cabo. In the aboriginal communities the village population constructed the house of the chief, tilled his fields and harvested his crops.

Child betrothal was common among the Guaraní, at least with those groups living along the Paraná River, and marriage usually took place shortly after puberty. The preferential form of marriage was between cross-cousins and between a maternal uncle and his niece. From inferences in Jesuitic literature it can be assumed that sororal polygny took place as well as union with a mother and her daughter. Chiefs and important shamans were the only ones able to support several wives, but it was said that some of these had from 15-30 wives. Chiefs also observed the levirate form of marriage. Residence is patrilocal and descent probably patrilineal.

Information on Guaraní kinship is rather sparse in the literature. Métraux in his excellent cultural summary makes no mention of it at all, while Schaden briefly mentions the fact that the Nandeva claim that within the structure of the family, consanguinity is considered bilateral and not bilinear (2: Schaden, p. 137). Kindreds are also mentioned by Schaden as pertaining to the Guaraní as a whole. A succinct account of the Cayuá kinship system is contained in 4: Watson, in which she says that the system is basically classificatory in nature and based on the genealogical principle in which kinship terms are extended bilaterally.

Although much of our information on the religion of the Guaraní comes from the work of Nimuendajú on the Apapocúva, there is enough generalized data available to indicate that the aboriginal Guaraní believed in a supreme creator god and a host of lesser gods and spirits. Animistic and eschatological beliefs were well developed as well as the mythology and cosmology. Shamanism was also a very important part of the religion and as noted previously, the shaman had much prestige and power in the society not only in terms of religion alone but also in the political hierarchy. Although most of his talents were used for the common good of the people, he could on occasion use them to cause illness or death by sorcery. This sorcery could be directed at individuals or entire villages.

Warfare was common among the Guaraní, especially between villages, with prisoners of war being slaughtered and eaten with the same ceremonialism (and relish) as that attributed to the Tupinamba, their neighbors. In aboriginal times Guaraní raiding parties ranged as far as the borders of the Inca Empire.

The SM4 Guaraní file consists of six sources, two translations from the Portuguese (2: Schaden and 4: Watson), one from the German (1: Hanke) and the remaining three in English. The focus of the file is on the Guaraní of southern Brazil including southern Mato Grosso, with Schaden's material concentrating on the Guaraní subgroups of Mbüá, Nandeva and Kayová. Hanke and the Watsons on the Cayuá (probably Schaden's Kayova). The locus of the Watsons' work on the Cayuá was centered in the village of Taquapir. The best general coverage of all Guaraní groups is probably to be found in Métraux's excellent summary (5: Métraux), which is based on a wide range of secondary source material including many early historical documents. Guaraní-Brazilian White acculturation is a major topic of concern to the authors whose works comprise this file, notably 1: Hanke, 2: Schaden, 3: Watson and 6: Watson. Various aspects of the acculturation process is discussed in each of these sources (e.g., in terms of material culture, economy, family, etc.). In 1: Hanke, for example, the effects of acculturation is discussed in terms of the economy and religion of the Cayuá. Hanke, a lawyer with considerable interest and field experience in Brazilian ethnography, did her fieldwork among the Cayuá around 1955, and the data she collected pertain mostly to that period. 2: Schaden, written by an ethnologist, presents excellent primary and secondary data on the Mbüá, Nandeva and Kayová of southern Brazil, with emphasis, as in Hanke, on acculturation, here in terms of material culture, economy, community and family structure, music and folklore. In this source special stress is placed on religion and the Guaraní world-view. Schaden studied the Guaraní from 1946-1962, staying at a number of Indian villages for varied periods of time, the longest being for four weeks at the village of Dourados. 3: Watson, written by an ethnologist using his own field data in conjunction with historical source materials, discusses the acculturation effects on the Cayuá of the Jesuit missionization period (1605-1767), and again in the 20th century with Indian-White Brazilian contacts. 4: Watson

is a brief article on kinship terminology and behavior of the Cayuá, with historical references to the 17th and 19th centuries. The author, an ethnologist, is the wife of James B. Watson, the author of source number 3, and accompanied him in the field. 6: Watson deals generally with economic acculturation among the Cayuá, with a critique and evaluation of some of the earlier historical sources on the Cayuá. The Watsons did their fieldwork in 1943. The file was processed in 1970-1974.]